

WILLIAM RAINEY HARPER COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT #512
COUNTIES OF COOK, KANE, LAKE, AND McHENRY, STATE OF ILLINOIS

Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of Wednesday, April 23, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board of Trustees of Community College District No. 512 was called to order by Chair William Kelley on Wednesday, April 23, 2025 at 5:15 p.m. in of the Wojcik Conference Center, 1200 W. Algonquin Road, Palatine, Illinois.

ROLL CALL

Present: Members Greg Dowell, Diane Hill, Bill Kelley, Walt Mundt, Nancy Robb, Pat Stack, and Student Member Liman Lei

Absent: Herb Johnson

Also present: Dr. Yolanda Barnes, Dean of Business and Social Sciences; Mike Barzacchini, Director of Marketing Services; Orlando Cabrera, Tech Support Specialist; Scott Cashman, Senior Manager, Community, Career and Corporate Education; Amanda Duval-Norwood, Chief Human Resources Officer; Rob Galick, EVP Finance and Administrative Services; Dr. Kathleen Gorski, Associate Provost of Curriculum and Instruction; Bob Grapenthien, Controller; Erika Hartman, Administrative Coordinator; Dr. Joanne Ivory, Dean Career and Technical Programs; Dr. Tamara Johnson, Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Jeff Julian, Chief of Staff/Vice President of External Affairs; Dr. Derek Leiter, Dean of Health Careers; Matt McLaughlin, Director of Insights, Planning, and Decision Support ; Kristyn Meyer, Associate Executive Director Foundation; Regan Myers, Director of Infrastructure Services; Bob Parzy, Associate Provost-Enrollment Services; Steve Petersen, Campus Architect; Kim Pohl, Director of Communications; Kimberley Polly, Dean Mathematics and Science; Colleen Rice, Executive Assistant Board of Trustees; Jaime Riewerts, Dean Liberal Arts; Darlene Schlenbecker, Vice President of Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness; Dr. Anna Strati, Director Institutional Research and Analytics; Deann Surdo, Director of Outcomes Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness; Brian Thomason, Director of Client Systems; Darice Trout, Senior Director of Workforce Solutions and Job Placement; Dr. Roderica Williams, Dean of Student Success and Retention; Dr. Ruth Williams, Provost; Riaz Yusuff, Chief Information Officer; Heather Zoldak, Chief Advancement Officer.

Guests: Eric W. Knox, Citizen; James Meyer, Citizen

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

DISCUSSION OF
FOLLOW UP ITEMS

Dr. Williams, Provost, opened the discussion by sharing insights into how the college is preparing for the future. She emphasized the importance of maintaining innovative academic programs and using data to inform institutional processes.

First, Dean Riewerts, Liberal Arts, provided an overview of the academic program lifecycle, detailing how programs are developed, maintained, and, when necessary, phased out. She presented a snapshot of Harper's academic areas, highlighting credentials with the largest number of completers. When evaluating whether to introduce a new program, the institution considers workforce alignment, specifically focusing on High Demand/High Wage programs. The process relies on multiple data sources and involves a complex workflow. For example, the development of a new Artificial Intelligence (AI) program illustrates how emerging industry needs drive innovation in academic offerings. The role of Business and Industry Leadership Teams (BILT), which help ensure that curricula reflect the current workforce demands, was also discussed.

Dean Leiter, Health Careers, explained the process for monitoring and maintaining program health. A tiered review structure based on data is used to assess each program, and this information is submitted to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) to ensure alignment with accreditation standards. These program reviews follow an annual cycle and incorporate data collected from classroom-level activities. The Practical Nursing Program was cited as a recent example that benefited from this process, resulting in improvements in quality and program outcomes.

While faculty have expressed frustration about the lack of feedback from ICCB, recent developments, including the formation of additional state committees, offer hope for more constructive input. The college is also actively identifying and correcting misalignments between current offerings and workforce needs.

Dean Polly, Mathematics and Science, spoke about the process of sunseting programs, noting that it requires careful consideration of performance metrics and viability. Discontinuing a program is not an immediate process, it requires multiple steps and institutional review. The Entrepreneurship Program was offered as a case study of a program undergoing this phase.

During the Q&A session, Trustee Mundt raised a question about student costs, especially for those enrolled in programs that do not lead to high-wage employment. He appreciated the emphasis on High Demand/High Wage careers and asked about regional opportunities in areas such as transportation management.

In response, Dean Riewerts acknowledged the value of this feedback and stated that the team would analyze the data accordingly. She referenced the use of Lightcast, a real-time labor market analytics tool, to guide program decisions in collaboration with local industry partners. Dr. Proctor expanded on this by describing a more holistic and responsive approach to programming that is informed by real-time data and industry needs. Dean Polly added that the college is committed to only creating programs that are tied to livable wages and career viability. She emphasized that degrees must align with job requirements, and the institution is cautious not to place students in programs that will not lead to sustainable employment. The use of stackable certificates was highlighted as a strategy to allow students to build credentials toward a full degree over time.

Trustee Robb commented on the importance of having a clear process for discontinuing programs, which is often overlooked. Trustee Kelley noted a positive shift in university collaboration and emphasized the need to closely monitor changes at the university level to ensure that students are enrolled in courses that align with transfer requirements.

Next, Dr. Proctor provided an update on the ongoing development of the institution's Strategic Plan. She explained that a comprehensive SWOT analysis has served as the foundational baseline for the process, helping to shape priorities aligned with Harper College's mission. The Strategic Planning and Accountability (SPA) Committee has demonstrated a strong level of commitment, with a focus on detail and thoughtful development of each strategic theme.

Darlene Schlenbecker, Vice President of Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness, shared that the strategic planning process has spanned nearly a full year and is currently in its ninth month. She walked attendees through the key milestones using a slide presentation outlining the step-by-step development process.

Three overarching themes were identified:

1. Supportive and Inclusive Community
2. Innovative and Responsive Education
3. Organizational Excellence

The process is currently in the "Feedback on Draft" stage, with preliminary reviews underway and feedback being gathered through shared governance channels.

The plan has identified three primary goals, which will serve as the foundation of the final proposal.

1. Provide innovative and responsive education that addresses the evolving needs of students, the workforce, and our community.

2. Cultivate an inclusive and supportive community that prioritizes holistic well-being for everyone.
3. Achieve organizational excellence by centering on mission-aligned initiatives that improve operations, encourage experimentation, and advance sustainability, while upholding the College's core values.

The next major milestone is to bring the Strategic Plan to the Board for formal approval at the June 2025 Board Meeting.

Trustee Kelley expressed appreciation for the work completed and highlighted that the policy-level elements of the plan are captured in the three goal statements. He emphasized the importance of identifying specific target areas beneath each of these goals, which will be part of the final presentation to the Board.

The Board commended the SPA Committee for its comprehensive approach and dedication throughout the planning process.

Jeff Julian reviewed the Board Packet.

FORMAL ACTIONS

Vice Chair Mundt motioned, Member Hill seconded to enter closed session to discuss OMA section 2(c)(1): The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body ... at 6:06 p.m. In a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

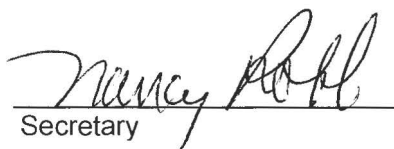
Member Dowell motioned; Member Hill seconded to adjourn the closed session and re-enter the regular meeting at 6:37 p.m. In a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Member Robb moved, Member Stack seconded, adjournment at 6:37 p.m.

In a voice vote, motion carried.


Chair


Secretary